IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE NORTHEASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)	
)	
Plaintiff,)	
v.)	No.
)	
RICKY A.W. CURTIS)	
3229 Highway 126)	
Blountville, Tennessee 37617,)	
)	
Defendant.)	

COMPLAINT FOR PERMANENT INJUNCTION

The United States of America, at the request of the Chief Counsel of the Internal Revenue Service, a delegate of the Secretary of the Treasury, and at the direction of the Attorney General of the United States, brings this action to compel defendant Ricky A.W. Curtis to timely withhold, collect and pay over to the Internal Revenue Service ("the Service") employment tax liabilities accruing by his law practice; to pay quarterly employment taxes and the balances due for these taxes, to collect the unpaid employment taxes assessed against him; and to enjoin him from further violating and interfering with the administration of the internal revenue laws. In support of this action, the United States alleges as follows.

Jurisdiction and Venue

- 1. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1340 and 1345, and 26 U.S.C. § 7402(a).
 - 2. Venue is proper in this Court by virtue of 28 U.S.C. §§ 1391 and 1396.

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<u>Parties</u>

- 3. The plaintiff is the United States of America.
- 4. The defendant, Ricky A.W. Curtis ("Curtis"), resides at 3229 Highway 126, Blountville, Tennessee, within the jurisdiction of the Court. Curtis is a self-employed attorney with a sole proprietorship law practice operated out of his house in Blountville, Tennessee.

Obligations To Make Deposits Of Employment Taxes

- 5. As an employer, Curtis is required by law to withhold from his employees' wages federal income and Federal Insurance Contribution Act ("FICA") taxes, and to pay over to the Service those withholdings along with the employer's own FICA taxes, and Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) taxes (collectively "employment taxes"). 26 U.S.C. §§ 3102, 3111, 3301, and 3402.
- 6. Curtis is required by law to make periodic deposits of withheld FICA taxes, as well as his share of employment taxes, in an appropriate federal depository bank in accordance with the federal deposit regulations. 26 U.S.C. §§ 6302, 6157; 26 C.F.R. §§ 31.6302-1, 31.6302(c)-1, 31.6302(c)-3. Curtis has consistently failed to make these deposits.
- 7. Curtis is required by law to file Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Returns (IRS Forms 941) and annual FUTA Returns (IRS Forms 940) with the Service. 26 U.S.C. § 6011; 26 C.F.R. § 31.6071(a)-1. Curtis has failed to file Forms 941 and Forms 940 for the periods and years at issue. The basis for the FICA and FUTA tax assessments made against Curtis are tax returns filed for him by the Service, under 26 U.S.C. § 6020(b). He has failed to pay the employment taxes due reflected on those returns.

Curtis' History Of Noncompliance With His Employment Tax Obligations

- 8. As an employer, Curtis has failed to make periodic deposits of withheld FICA taxes, as well as his share of employment taxes, in a federal depository bank in accordance with the federal deposit regulations. Curtis is indebted to the United States for FICA taxes for the second and third quarters of 2009, the first and second quarters of 2011, the fourth quarter of 2012, the four quarters of 2013, the four quarters of 2014, the four quarters of 2015, and the first, second, and third quarters of 2016, as of April 9, 2018, in the total amount of \$50,370.04, plus plus statutory additions.
- 9. Curtis has failed to pay FICA taxes arising out of the employment tax liabilities of his law practice beginning with the second quarter of 2009 and, as noted above, continuing through the third quarter of 2016, resulting in a FICA tax liability, as of April 9, 2016, of over \$50,000, and his failure to pay FICA taxes is likely to continue unless an injunction is issued.
- 10. Even when Curtis fails to pay over taxes withheld from his employees' wages, the employees receive credit against any tax due; and amounts credited in excess of tax due are treated as overpayments which may be refunded to the employee. See Slodov v. United States, 436 U.S. 238, 243 (1978). Thus, the United States is harmed when it must credit an employee's account even though the withheld taxes were not paid over to the United States.

The Service's Unsuccessful Efforts to Enable Curtis to Comply With the Tax Laws

11. Curtis is an attorney practicing in Sullivan County, Tennessee. His law office, which is also his personal residence, is located across the street from the county courthouse and jail. Curtis has consistently failed to file employment tax returns and pay employment taxes since the second quarter of 2009. The Service has taken numerous actions in an attempt to enable him

to comply with the internal revenue laws. In March, 2016, the Service issued a collection due process ("CDP") notice to Curtis and levied upon his bank account at First Tennessee Bank, which yielded approximately \$ 2,100. The Service issued a levy to the State of Tennessee, which yielded \$ 1,250. Curtis has no assets other than his office / personal residence. The Service has filed notices of federal tax liens in Sullivan County. There are no other administrative options, such as an installment agreement or offer in compromise, that would be appropriate, warranting an injunction.

COUNT I – REDUCE EMPLOYMENT TAX ASSESSMENTS TO JUDGMENT

- 12. The United States incorporates by reference the allegations in \P 1 11, above.
- 13. Curtis failed to file Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Returns (IRS Form 941) for the periods at issue. After an investigation into his unpaid federal employment tax liabilities, a delegate of the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States made assessments against him for federal employment (Form 941) taxes, and statutory additions to tax, as follows:

Tax Period Ending	Date of Assessment	Unpaid Balance of Assessment as of 4/9/2018	Accrued Interest and Pay Penalty (P) as of 4/9/2018	Amount Due as of 4/9/2018
6/30/2009	05/23/2016	\$ 901.30	\$ 13.47	\$ 914.77
9/30/2009	05/23/2016	\$ 1,591.99	\$ 23.78	\$ 1,615.77
3/31/2011	05/23/2016	\$ 3,363.85	\$ 50.23	\$ 3,414.08
6/30/2011	05/23/2016	\$ 3,331.54	\$ 49.75	\$ 3,381.29

12/31/2012	08/31/2015	\$ 833.32	\$ 12.44	\$ 845.76
3/31/2013	08/31/2015	\$ 2,179.13	\$ 32.53	\$ 2,211.66
6/30/2013	08/31/2015	\$ 2,215.93	\$ 33.08	\$ 2,249.01
9/30/2013	08/31/2015	\$ 2,252.13	\$ 33.62	\$ 2,285.75
12/31/2013	08/31/2015	\$ 2,286.87	\$ 34.15	\$ 2,321.02
3/31/2014	08/31/2015	\$ 2,321.54	\$ 34.67	\$ 2,356.21
6/30/2014	05/30/2016	\$ 2,388.48	\$ 35.67	\$ 2,424.15
9/30/2014	05/23/2016	\$ 2,461.62	\$ 36.76	\$ 2,498.38
12/31/2014	05/23/2016	\$ 2,615.13	\$ 39.05	\$ 2,654.18
3/31/2015	05/23/2016	\$ 2,693.57	\$ 40.22 \$ 16.94 (P)	\$ 2,750.73
6/30/2015	05/23/2016	\$ 2,870.17	\$ 42.85 \$ 45.89 (P)	\$ 2,958.91
9/30/2015	05/23/2016	\$ 2,931.00	\$ 43.77 \$ 76.25 (P)	\$ 3,051.02
12/31/2015	05/23/2016	\$ 2,701.77	\$ 40.35 \$ 98.84 (P)	\$ 2,840.96
3/31/2016	01/16/2017	\$ 2,540.10	\$ 128.31 \$ 279.47 (P)	\$ 2,947.88
6/30/2016	01/16/2017	\$ 2,708.91	\$ 137.02 \$ 307.39 (P)	\$ 3,153.32
9/30/2016	02/06/2017	\$ 2,993.82	\$ 143.96 \$ 357.41 (P)	\$ 3,495.19
TOTAL				\$ 50,370.04

- 14. Despite notice and demand for payment, Curtis has failed, neglected, or refused to pay the outstanding assessments, described above. As a result, there remains due and owing from Curtis for unpaid FICA taxes, and statutory additions, as of April 9, 2018, the amount of \$50,370.04, plus statutory additions to tax accruing thereon according to law.
- Returns (IRS Form 940) for the years 2012 and 2013. On August 31, 2015, a delegate of the Secretary of the Treasury assessed against Curtis Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) taxes, and statutory additions to tax, for the years 2012 and 2013. Despite notice and demand for payment, Curtis has failed, neglected or refused to pay the outstanding assessment. As a result, there remains due and owing from Curtis for unpaid FUTA tax, and statutory additions, as of April 9, 2018, for the years 2012 and 2013, the amounts of \$ 140.45 and \$ 121.36, respectively, plus statutory additions to tax accruing thereon according to law.

WHEREFORE, the United States of America, prays as follows:

- A. That the Court order and adjudge that Ricky A.W. Curtis is indebted to the United States for unpaid FICA taxes, and statutory addition to tax, as of April 9, 2018, in the amount of \$50,370.04, plus statutory additions to tax according to law, and continuing until paid;
- B. That the Court order and adjudge that Ricky A.W. Curtis is indebted to the United States for unpaid FUTA taxes and statutory addition to tax, for the year 2012, in the amount of \$ 140.45, plus statutory additions to tax according to law, and continuing until paid;
 - C. That the Court order and adjudge that Ricky A.W. Curtis is indebted to the

United States for unpaid FUTA taxes and statutory addition to tax, for the year 2013, in the amount of \$ 121.36, plus statutory additions to tax according to law, and continuing until paid

B. Such other and further relief as may be deemed just and proper under the circumstances, including costs.

COUNT II – INJUNCTION UNDER 26 U.S.C. § 7402(a)

- 16. 26 U.S.C. § 7402(a) authorizes the United States district court to issue injunctions as may be necessary or appropriate for enforcement of the internal revenue laws. The injunction remedy is in addition to, and not exclusive of, other remedies available to the United States.
- 17. As an employer, Curtis has substantially interfered with and continues to substantially interfere with the internal revenue laws by continually failing to pay employment tax obligations required by 26 U.S.C. §§ 3102, 3111, 3301, and 3402, and failing to make employment tax deposits as required by 26 U.S.C. § 6302.
- 18. Curtis' tax payment and filing history is inexcusable and after years of non-compliance, it is unlikely that he will suddenly comply with the employment tax laws.
- 19. The Service has expended significant resources in an attempt to bring Curtis into tax compliance, including filing notices of federal tax lien against Curtis with respect to his unpaid federal tax liabilities, and issuing an IRS Letter 903 to him on January 26, 2017, which advised Curtis that the United States could commence a civil action for an injunction that would require him to pay his federal employment tax liabilities as required by law. While there remains some potential for collection of past due amounts through continued enforcement action, it is unreasonable to expect him to timely pay income taxes in the future. Absent an injunction, his

non-compliance with his income tax payment obligations will almost assuredly continue, causing irreparable harm to the United States.

- 20. Absent court intervention, the United States lacks an adequate legal remedy to prevent additional nonpayment of employment taxes by Curtis. The United States has suffered and will continue to suffer irreparable harm as a result of his law practice's violation of federal statutes, including but not limited to: (a) loss of tax revenue, including the loss of employee(s)' FICA and income taxes for which the employee(s) already have received credit; (b) the drain on limited Internal Revenue Service resources on account of required oversight and unsuccessful collection efforts; (c) the lack of other avenues to fully collect his law practice's employment tax liabilities; and (d) the harm to the tax system as a whole when competitors see the law practice's continued non-compliance with the internal revenue laws.
- 21. The harm suffered by the United States as a result of the continued nonpayment of employment taxes outweighs the harm suffered by Curtis being required to timely pay employment tax obligations.
- 22. An injunction would serve the public interest. As the efficacy of the federal income tax and Social Security system relies on employers to collect and remit income and FICA taxes paid by its employees, the nonpayment undermines a vital cog in our system of tax collection. Additionally, by using tax money to pay the law practice's expenses, Curtis exacts an involuntary subsidy from taxpayers and effectively gains an unfair competitive advantage over competitors that comply with the tax laws.
 - 23. In the absence of an injunction backed by the Court's contempt powers, Curtis

is likely to continue to obstruct and interfere with the enforcement of the internal revenue laws by the nonpayment of employment taxes to the detriment of the United States.

WHEREFORE, the United States respectfully prays that the Court enter a permanent injunction ordering that Curtis:

- a. Has engaged and is engaging in conduct interfering with the enforcement of the internal revenue laws, and that injunctive relief under 26 U.S.C. § 7402(a) and the Court's inherent equity powers is appropriate to stop that conduct;
- b. Deposit withheld employee income taxes, withheld employee FICA taxes, and employer FICA taxes, in an appropriate federal depository bank, in accordance with federal deposit regulations;
- c. Sign and deliver affidavits to the Internal Revenue Service office located at 710 Locust Street, Knoxville, Tennessee 37902 (attn: Shane Murray revenue officer / Stephanie Mountcastle revenue officer acting group manager) or to such other location designated by the Service, no later than the 20th of each month, stating that the requisite deposits of withheld income tax, withheld FICA tax, employer FICA tax, and unemployment tax have been made in a timely manner;
 - d. Timely file federal employment tax returns (IRS Forms 941 and 940);
- e. Timely pay all outstanding liabilities due on each Form 941 return and Form 940 return required to be filed;
- f. Be prohibited from assigning any property or making any payments after an injunction is issued until the withholding liabilities and employment taxes are first properly

deposited or paid to the Service;

g. That the Court retain jurisdiction over this case to ensure compliance with this

injunction; and

k. That the Court grant the United States such other relief, including costs, as the

Court deems appropriate.

Date: April 10, 2018.

J. DOUGLAS OVERBEY United States Attorney

/s/ Michael J. Martineau
MICHAEL J. MARTINEAU
Trial Attorney, Tax Division
U. S. Department of Justice
Post Office Box 227, Ben Franklin Station
Washington, D.C. 20044
Telephone/copier: (202) 307-6483

Telecopier: (202) 514-6866

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS	9		DEFENDANTS	RICKY A.W. CURTIS,	3229 Highway 126,
UNITED STATES			Blountville, TN 376	17	
(b) County of Residence of	of First Listed Plaintiff ACEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CA	(SES)		of First Listed Defendant (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)	
			NOTE: IN LAND CO THE TRACT	ONDEMNATION CASES, USE T OF LAND INVOLVED.	THE LOCATION OF
Michael J. Martineau, Ta Ben Franklin Station, Wa	d Division, U.S. Dept shington, D.C. 20044,	of Justice, P.O. Box 22 Telephone: 202.307.6	Attorneys (If Known) 483 Unknown		
II. BASIS OF JURISDI	CTION		CITIZENSUID OF D	DINCIDAL DADTIES	(Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff
		ne Bax Oniy)	(For Diversity Cases Only)		and One Box for Defendant)
X I U.S. Government Plaintiff	(U.S. Government)	Not a Party)	Citizen of This State		
1 2 U.S. Government Defendant	☐ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizensh	ip of Parties in Item III)	Citizen of Another State	2 Cl 2 Incorporated and of Business In	
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IV. NATURE OF SUIT			FORFEITURE/PENALTY		of Suit Code Descriptions, OTHER STATUTES
CONTRACT O 110 Insurance	PERSONAL INJURY	PERSONAL INJURY	☐ 625 Drug Related Seizure	☐ 422 Appeal 28 USC 158	O 375 False Claims Act
☐ 120 Marine	310 Airplane	🗇 365 Personal Injury -	of Property 21 USC 881	423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157	☐ 376 Qui Tam (31 USC
☐ 130 Miller Act ☐ 140 Negotiable Instrument	☐ 315 Airplane Product Liability	Product Liability 367 Health Care/	Er 690 Other		3729(a)) 400 State Reapportionment
☐ 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment	320 Assault, Libel & Slander	Pharmaceutical Personal Injury		PROPERTY RIGHTS 820 Copyrights	☐ 410 Antitrust ☐ 430 Banks and Banking
Ist Medicare Act	330 Federal Employers	Product Liability	10.0	☐ 830 Patent	☐ 450 Commerce
☐ 152 Recovery of Defaulted	Liability 340 Marine	☐ 368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product		☐ 835 Patent - Abbreviated New Drug Application	☐ 460 Deportation ☐ 470 Racketeer Influenced and
Student Loans (Excludes Veterans)	345 Marine Product	Liability		☐ 840 Trademark	Corrupt Organizations
☐ 153 Recovery of Overpayment	Liability	PERSONAL PROPERTY 370 Other Fraud	LABOR ☐ 710 Fair Labor Standards	SOCIAL SECURITY 861 HIA (1395ff)	☐ 480 Consumer Credit ☐ 490 Cable/Sat TV
of Veteran's Benefits 160 Stockholders' Suits	350 Motor Vehicle 355 Motor Vehicle	370 Other Pradu	Act	☐ 862 Black Lung (923)	☐ 850 Securities/Commodities/
190 Other Contract	Product Liability 360 Other Personal	380 Other Personal Property Damage	720 Labor/Management Relations	☐ 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) ☐ 864 SSID Title XVI	Exchange B90 Other Statutory Actions
☐ 195 Contract Product Liability ☐ 196 Franchise	Injury	☐ 385 Property Damage	☐ 740 Railway Labor Act	☐ 865 RS1 (405(g))	☐ 891 Agricultural Acts
	☐ 362 Personal Injury - Medical Malpractice	Product Liability	751 Family and Medical Leave Act		© 893 Environmental Matters © 895 Freedom of Information
REAL PROPERTY	CIVIL RIGHTS	PRISONER PETITIONS	790 Other Labor Litigation	FEDERAL TAX SUITS	Act
210 Land Condemnation	440 Other Civil Rights	Habeas Corpus: 463 Alien Detainee	791 Employee Retirement Income Security Act	R 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant)	896 Arbitration 899 Administrative Procedure
☐ 220 Foreclosure ☐ 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment	441 Voting 442 Employment	510 Motions to Vacate	income Security Act	☐ 871 IRS—Third Party	Act/Review or Appeal of
240 Torts to Land	☐ 443 Housing/	Sentence		26 USC 7609	Agency Decision 950 Constitutionality of
☐ 245 Tort Product Liability ☐ 290 All Other Real Property	Accommodations 445 Amer. w/Disabilities •	530 General 535 Death Penalty	IMMIGRATION	1	State Statutes
	Employment	Other:	462 Naturalization Application		
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VI. CAUSE OF ACTIO	N Brief description of ca	7402(a)			
THE PROPERTY IN			employment tax deposits, DEMAND S		ent taxes, and pay taxes if demanded in complaint:
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:	O CHECK IF THIS UNDER RULE 2	IS A CLASS ACTION 3, F.R.Cv.P.	50,370.04	JURY DEMAND	
VIII. RELATED CASI	E(S)				
IF ANY	(See Instructions)	JUDGE		DOCKET NUMBER	
DATE April 10, 20	18	SIGNATURE OF ATTOR	A Martineau	0,000	AND SERVED OF SERVED
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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the Eastern District of Tennessee UNITED STATES OF AMERICA Plaintiff(s) Civil Action No. v. RICKY A.W. CURTIS Defendant(s) SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION RICKY A.W. CURTIS To: (Defendant's name and address) Rickey A.W. Curtis Attorney at Law 3229 Highway 126 Blountville, TN 37617 A lawsuit has been filed against you. Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: MICHAEL J. MARTINEAU, ESQUIRE Trial Attorney, Tax Division U.S. Depatment of Justice P.O. Box 227, Ben Franklin Station Washington, D.C. 20044 If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court. CLERK OF COURT Date: Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

Civil Action No.

PROOF OF SERVICE

(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (1))

of individual and title, if any)		
ne summons on the individual a	t (place)	
	on (date)	; or
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Additional information regarding attempted service, etc: